



## The Proposed Trail System

The East Coast Greenway (ECG) traverses the Atlantic Coast of the United States linking Calais, Maine at the Canadian border with Key West, Florida. In Virginia, the trail goes south from Washington, D.C. crossing the Memorial Bridge to the Mount Vernon Trail through Fredericksburg to Richmond and then south via the planned Virginia Tobacco Heritage Trail to Raleigh, North Carolina. An alternate trail, the Historic Coastal Route, follows the Virginia Capital Trail to Jamestown and then on to Virginia Beach and coastal North Carolina.

The ECG is a blend of paved greenways, well maintained crushed gravel paths, urban streets and rural bike routes. The trail can be traversed by foot or bicycle anywhere along its length, and accessed by wheelchairs, inline skaters, horseback riders and other non-motorized means in select areas. Eighty percent of the route will be off-road, but it is anticipated that some on-road segments will be utilized in sparsely populated areas and in some urban centers. The route has been selected to take advantage of the relatively flat terrain of the coastal plain to provide a safe and non-strenuous corridor that is appropriate for thru-hikers, touring cyclists, casual recreation and family trips.

The ECG is a unique product that can excite potential users, government officials and funding agencies. The audacious scope of this 3,000 mile traffic-free project can be compared to both the Appalachian Trail as well as to the Interstate Highway System. It is a bold national scale project that provides important local and regional services.

# EAST COAST GREENWAY

*Linking Cities from Maine to Florida*



East Coast  
Greenway®  
ALLIANCE

## GOALS

The East Coast Greenway (ECG) is a long-distance urban trail system establishing a city-to-city transportation corridor for cyclists, hikers, and other non-motorized users. By connecting existing and planned trails, a continuous, safe, green route 3,000 miles long is now taking shape. The trail directly accesses numerous travel destinations, stores and hotels and other service facilities, residential areas and work places to promote human-powered recreation, commuting and epic multi-state adventures. While the trail is being developed using on-road segments, the long range goal is a 3,000 mile off-road trail.

## PARTNERS

The East Coast Greenway Alliance partners with countless state and local governments, bike clubs, trail advocacy groups and determined volunteers. In Virginia the ECG benefits regularly from the effort of the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, the Virginia Department of Transportation, BikeWalk Virginia, the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation, the Virginia Bicycle Federation, and the Virginia Horse Council.

The role of the East Coast Greenway Alliance is to promote the vision of the trail, designate trail segments, define criteria for the kind of trail to be created, promote trail use and provide coordination among the many players who will develop, own, and manage the trail. The alliance has developed route maps, standard signs and cue sheets, and monitors the condition of completed trail segments.

## AUTHORITY LEGISLATION

Legislation passed in 1972 authorized DCR to establish and administer a state-wide system of non-motorized, scenic, recreational and connecting side trails.  
§ 10.1-204

## DESIGNATED OFF-ROAD SEGMENTS OF THE EAST COAST GREENWAY IN VIRGINIA

- BULL RUN OCCOQUAN TRAIL
- ACCOTINK STREAM VALLEY TRAIL
- ARLINGTON MEMORIAL BRIDGE
- MOUNT VERNON TRAIL
- LACROSSE TO BRODNAX SECTION, TOBACCO HERITAGE TRAIL
- VIRGINIA CAPITAL TRAIL
- DISMAL SWAMP CANAL TRAIL

## BENEFITS

The ECG enhances communities, improves quality of life and increases property values. Specifically, the greenway:

- Increases tourism dollars to towns and cities along the route
- Attracts eco-tourists and adventure travelers
- Increases transportation options
- Reduces roadway congestion during peak tourism periods
- Makes communities more livable and enjoyable for residents and tourists

The 30 million people in 15 states and the District of Columbia that live within a short distance of the East Coast Greenway, provide an extensive market of potential trail customers and supporters. Greenway users will buy recreational gear and will travel to marquee greenway locations. Hotel stays, food and associated tourism spending can be the direct result of this trail. Further benefits of the greenway are an improved quality of life, a source of civic pride, less stress for trail users and higher property values in neighborhoods close to the greenway.

## FUNDING NEEDED FOR PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

While the overall costs of completing 3,000 miles of trail is significant, much of this money will eventually be made available through federal, state and local infrastructure projects. Just as the first 20 percent of the off-road trail has been completed as a series of small local and regional projects, much of the remaining trail can be completed as communities prioritize and fund local trail initiatives. However, funding for trail bridges to cross busy highways and waterways is a major concern. Also, trail funding through low density rural areas between communities may be difficult to secure. Funding of these important links will be a challenge that will require major political support and continued grassroots effort.



## Project Status – Accomplishments and Milestones

The East Coast Greenway is complete as a largely on-road bike route from Maine to Florida. Cue sheets, maps and other way finding guides are available. At present, 20 percent of the route is off-road and this percentage continues to grow. Key milestones that include 100-mile continuous sections are expected by 2010. Also, eight "Designation" cities have been identified and travel guide maps routes for each of these cities are to be developed and distributed in 2009. A Virginia travel guide and cue sheet is being prepared by the East Coast Greenway Alliance with the support of Virginia's Departments of Conservation and Recreation and Transportation.

National Route Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current travel route of 2,800 miles is complete</li> <li>• 545 miles of 3,000 off-road miles are complete</li> <li>• Trail markers posted on 170 miles of greenway and trail</li> </ul>
Staffing and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff of eight full time employees including one regional staff (Steve Bevington (919) 638-6250)</li> <li>• Many volunteers also available</li> </ul>
Virginia Accomplishments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current travel route complete for both the spine and Historic Coastal Route through Virginia</li> <li>• 9% of 276 off-road trail miles complete</li> <li>• State travel map of the East Coast presently underway development by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (for VDOT)</li> <li>• Route included in 2007 Virginia Outdoors Plan</li> </ul>
Longest completed segment in VA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mount Vernon Trail</li> </ul>
Model Section	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Virginia Capital Trail near Jamestown Settlement</li> </ul>

The Virginia portion of the East Coast Greenway is one of five long distance trail networks that serve as the foundation in developing a statewide Virginia Trail Plan. Long range, Virginia's plan will strive for a commonwealth traversed by a system of multi-purpose trails linking Virginia's communities, open spaces and natural landscapes.

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